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ABSTRACT

A prediction equation for teacher morale was developed from the responses of 236 teachers in a large school system in Mississippi. The Supervisory Conference Rating (SCR) was used to measure teachers' perceptions of the supervisory conference following observation by the principal. The Zones of Indifference of these teachers were measured with the Zones of Indifference Instrument, and the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire was used as a measure of teacher morale. All correlation coefficients except SCR 1 and total SCR were significant. Higher morale scores were reported by: (1) younger teachers; (2) teachers with wider zones of indifference; (3) teachers receiving the supervisor conference more positively; (4) those who teach at lower levels; (5) teachers with fewer years of experience; (6) teachers with shorter tenure at their present school; and (7) female teachers. (SLD)

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THE PREDICTION OF TEACHER MORALE USING THE SUPERVISORY CONFERENCE RATING, THE ZONES OF INDIFFERENCE INSTRUMENT AND SELECTED PERSONAL VARIABLES

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The Prediction of Teacher Morale Using the Supervisory Conference Rating, The Zones of Indifference Instrument and Selected Personal Variables

Statement of the Problem

The problem in this study was to develop a prediction equation for teacher morale, as measured by the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire (PTO) using the Supervisory Conference Rating (SCR), the Zones of Indifference Instrument (ZII) and selected personal variables.

Rationale

There is considerable evidence that the educational reform movement has had a profound effect on teachers' attitudes and morale. There is little doubt that reform has increased teachers' work load and has pushed them toward their frustration level.

The SCR has been used in several studies to measure teachers' attitudes concerning the supervisory conference. There is evidence that it also reflects the influence of various other factors in the teachers' environment.

The ZII has been used to determine whether the current milieu has influenced teachers' acceptance of authority. One study indicated that when teachers' zones of indifference are narrower, their morale is lower.

Other studies using the ZII have indicated that teachers involved in union activities (strikes and work stoppages) have

narrower zones of indifference than teachers who are not involved in such activities.

The purpose of this study is to develop a prediction equation for teacher morale using the SCR and the ZII.

Instrumentation

The Supervisory Conference Rating (SCR) is a semantic differential designed to assess the attitudes of teachers toward a conference with their principal concerning classroom observation. This instrument, composed of 24 adjective pairs, contains two subscales which have been demonstrated to be stable through two separate factor analytic studies. The first scale describes attitudes of teachers toward the environment of the conference and the second scale describes perceived characteristics of the principals' behavior during the conference. Internal reliability of the instrument as determined by an alpha coefficient was .94. Attitudes measured by this instrument correlate significantly with teachers' perceptions of principals' leadership behaviors. In another validity study, results from the SCR were found to correlate positively with teachers' ratings of principals' collaborative supervisory behavior.

Teachers' compliance with the directives of their principals was measured with the Zones of Indifference Instrument, developed by Wilkes and Blackbourn (1981). Responses to the 71 items were

made on a four-point Likert scale indicating the degree of compliance to typical directives issued by principals. Lower scores represented a greater degree of compliance with administrative directives.

Two factors, teacher determined practice and administrator determined policy, were measured by the instrument. Alpha coefficients measuring internal reliability for the two factors and the total instrument are as follows: factor 1, .92; factor 2, .88; and the total instrument, .93.

The PTO, which was used to measure teacher morale in the present study, is a widely used copyrighted instrument which is available commercially. It yields a total score and 10 sub-scale scores based on meaningful morale categories. An internal consistency reliability coefficient of .96 is reported, while validity was established using peer judgments.

Procedure

The instruments, the SCR, the ZII, and the PTO were administered to 280 teachers in five selected schools in a large school system in Mississippi. Two hundred thirty-six usable responses were returned. This constituted a return rate of 80 percent.

The SCR was used to measure teachers' perceptions of the supervisory conference following observation by the principal.

The ZII was used to measure the Zones of Indifference of teachers, and the PTO was used as a measure of teacher morale.

Stepwise multiple regression procedures were used to analyze the data.

Findings

The simple correlations between the two subscales and the total score of the SCR, the two subscales and the total score of the ZII and the PTO are presented in table 1. An examination of the data indicates that all correlation coefficients except SCR 1 and total SCR are significant at the .05 level.

Younger teachers, teachers with wider zones of indifference, teachers who view the supervisory conference more positively, teachers who teach at lower levels, female teachers, teachers with fewer years of experience, and teachers who have been in their present school the fewest years report significantly higher morale scores on the PTO.

Table 1

Correlations of Zones of Indifference, Supervisory Conference Rating and Personal Variables With Teacher Morale

Variables	r
ZII 1	-.27*
ZII 2	-.33*
Total ZII	-.30*
SCR 1	-.01
SCR 2	.39*
Total SCR	.12
Grade level taught	-.56*
Sex	-.52*
Age	-.59*
Years experience	-.45*
Present school	-.51*

*r __ .17 Significant at .05 level

Examination of the data presented in table 2 indicates that when all the predictors are considered they account for 56 percent of the variance on teacher morale.

Age is the best single prediction of morale followed by subscale 2 (Principal's Behavior) on the SCR, years of experience, subscale 2 on the SCR and subscale 2 on the ZII. Subscale 2 does not enter the prediction equation until fourth. This phenomenon is probably due to some masking effect concerning years of experience and subscale 1 on the SCR. Further research will be conducted in attempting to determine the reasons for this phenomenon.

Table 2

Results of Multiple Correlations
Predicting Teacher Morale

Variables	Multiple R	R2 % of Variance	R2 Change	F
Age	.5939	.35	0.35	127.51*
Yrs. Exp.	.6224	.3975	0.357	13.21*
SCR 1	.6483	.42	0.338	13.14*
SCR 2	.7324	.54	.12	57.84*
ZIND 2	.7391	.54	0.0199	4.99*
ZIND 1	.7436	.55	0.0167	3.43
Grade T	.7472	.56	0.0154	2.79
Sex	.7486	.56	0.0021	1.08
Yrs. Prs. Sch.	.7487	.56	0.0001	.05

* F __ 3.84 Significant at .05 level

Summary

The problem in this study was to develop a prediction equation for teacher morale as measured by the Purdue Teacher Opinionaire (PTO) using the Supervisory Conference Rating (SCR) and the Zones of Indifference Instrument (ZII) and selected personal and experience variables.

The three instruments were administered to 280 teachers in an urban school system in Mississippi. Two hundred thirty-six usable sets of instruments were returned.

The data were treated using a stepwise multiple regression procedure. All correlations were significant at the .05 level except for SCR 1 and total SCR.

All relationships ranging in the large effect size domain show the SCR, the ZII and the selected personal variables explained 56 percent of the variance in teacher morale.

In the prediction study, age was found to be the best predictor of morale.

The study in general found that younger teachers, teachers with wider zones of indifference, teachers who view the supervisory conference more positively, teachers who teach at lower levels, teachers with fewer years of experience, and teachers who have shorter tenure in their present school report significantly higher morale scores on the PTO.